SOME

Legible Characters

OF

FAITH & LOVE

Towards the Bleſſed

CAUSE & KINGDOM

OF

CHRIST:

Worthy to be known and read of all men.

Being

Some of the laſt Meditations of that Faithfull Servant of the Lord Mr. *Thomas Higgenſon*, lately deceaſed a very firm friend (both living and dying) unto the Intereſt and Work of the Lord Jeſus in theſe laſt days.

Iſaiah 42. 9. *Behold the former things are come to paſſe, and new things do I declare before they ſpring forth, I tell you of them, ſing unto the Lord a new ſong.*

Iſaiah 43. 21. *This People have I formed for my ſelf.*

London, Printed by *G. D.* for *Tho. Brewſter*, and are to be ſould at his Shop at the Sign of the three Bibles in *Pauls* Church-Yard. 1659.

THE EPISTLE

To the

READER:

THE Breathings of the Spirit of Chriſt *in the Author of the* enſuing little Treatiſe, *will certainly be very comfortable, and refreſhing to all thoſe, who find any* freſh Affections *ſtirring in them to that* Glorious Cauſe *which hath been ſo unworthily and ſo ſhamefully entreated of late years, by an* Apoſtatizing Generation. *The* myſticall Harmony *of their Spirits, which the* King of Saints *is now ſecretly putting in tune, in order to that* harping and ſinging mentioned *Revel.* 14. 2, 3. *and* 15. 3. *will be ſo melodious in ſome competent ſpace of time, that*

many will be very desirous to learn to sing and play upon those instruments, *which* David our King, the sweet singer of Israel, *hath invented for his Victorious and Tryumphing Followers and Friends. But it was revealed to the* Apostle, *that* no man could learn that Song, but the hundred fourty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth. *That, this* Servant of Christ *lately deceased was much* Redeemed from the earth, and indeed from among men, *and so the more capable of singing that new song before mentioned, is well known to many in this City and elsewhere.*

A true estimate of the Elevation of this Spirit above the base things of the earth, may be easily taken by such Artists as are well skilled in the Celestial or Evangelical Mathematticks; If they do diligently peruse a former Treatise *of his, called,* Sighs for Righteousnesse, *penned not long after the* Cromwelian *Apostacy and usurpation. They will find the Spirit that appeareth in those Queries, to be a very serious, a very savoury, a very penetrating* * *Spirit. And I could wish for mine owne part, that the substance and series of that Discourse were deeply*

* *As also in those other Treatises of his called,* A Lamenting Word. Glory afar off, now stepping in. The Indwellings of the Spirit. A Testimony to the True Jesus.

ly

ly imprinted in my mind, and in the minds of all those, who do fixedly expect those most marvelous Productions, and Mutations which are about to break forth, from the deep Counsels of his will, who is recapitulating or bringing all things to a Head in his Son, both which are in Heaven, and which are on Earth, even in him.

I was desired by some of the Authors Friends to perfix a Title and a few words, to the Reader for his own good. But who or what am I? that I should hope to promote any thing of this nature, my very Name *being offensive to multitudes, But the day will declare, That the cause wherein I have by a most blessed* Conduct *imbarked my* Name, *my* Liberty, *my* Estate, *my* Life, *my* All, *will make amends for all those scandalous, slanderous Reproaches, wherein it was hoped I might have been buried alive, long before this time of the day. But I know I am (with all I have) in the same ship with the* Lord Jesus Christ, *and therefore I can* Despise their Despisings, *who after all their* Insolent Language, *have cause to be ashamed of the mistakes and other pittifull products of their own shallow fluid judgments, They must take their aim better the next time, if they can. As for me, I blesse the Lord, that I do sometimes meet mine own Spirit touched with the* Magnetick vertue *of the Spirit of Christ in the Dis-*

courses

courſes and Writings of others, whoſe Spirits were found faithful in the day of Rebuke and Blaſphemy, *which hath paſſed over us, in the number of whom I reckon this* dear diſceaſed Friend *to be one. And could have wiſhed, that the* Following Papers *might have been perfected and publiſhed by himſelf, before his departure: In regard that ſeverall* advantages, *and* elegancies *will be found, by judicious Readers, to be very much wanting, through many miſpointings, miſtakes, and errataes, which were paſt cure before they came to my hand. Nevertheleſſe, I ſhall do the beſt office I can* to ſerve in love, *both his living Readers, and my deceaſed Friend, by rectifying ſome things which are amiſſe, as in the* Errataes *following.*

All is commended to the Bleſſing of him, who worketh all things after the Counſell of his own will, *no more at the preſent, Reader, from*

Thy Friend and Servant
for the Lords ſake,

CHR. FEAKE.

London this 6th of the 4th month, 1659.

Errata.

PAge 10. line 36. read *one of the twins.* pag. 11. l. ult. r. *againſt Babil'on.* p. 12. l. 19. r. *wherof* p. 9. l 1. dele *as.* p. 20. l. 14. for *as* r. *and* l. 16. for *off* r. *of.* p. 21 l. 11 dele *how.* p. 22. l 12. r. *with clay.* l. 21. make a (,) at law. l. 33. r. *unſuitable.* p. 23. 2. r. *mere.* l. 32. r. *when* p. 25. l 32. r. *alone.* p. 32. l. 25. r. *loſſe.* l. ult. dele *of.*

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AS God has in every Age had ſome ſpecial work upon the wheel, and as the ſame has ever been attended with much oppoſition, difficulty and offence, ſo he has alwayes given to ſome of his Servants an eye to ſee and be affected with it, and to put their helping hand unto it: Although the things, which have been of late the Travel of many, and yet are of ſome amongſt us, being of ſuch weight and worth, of ſuch bleſſed and glorious conſequence, would require men of a more excellent ſpirit, and skilful hand, to ſet them forth in their proper beauty and luſtre, yet ſuch ſervice as I had, love conſtrained me to offer, eſpecially at this time, wherein the Exigencies of Truth call for ſomewhat at our hands. If unbelief, ſecurity and revolt had not choaked that Faith, Light, and Love, unto the Lord and his preſent Works in the World, whereby many among us were led out to undertake and effect great things in purſuance thereof, that Truth would by this time have been witneſs of it ſelf in reall effects to the face of

the world, and would not have needed a vindication of this nature by word or argument, to wit, *That God is doing new and extraordinary things in this day in the earth*: To obtain clearness and certainty in which point is of high concernment, unto all such as would not be left in the dark, concerning the great designations of Providence, and their own duty, and as would be led out through that confusion at this day among us, of contrary principles, affections, and interests, unto a right Judgement therein; it being to be rationally concluded, that if all things are to continue as they were, and no new thing to be done, that then those high Interests lately contended for, and all wayes and means put in practise for the obtaining thereof, are to be condemned, as which had a tendencie to introduce a new state of things, and the present course into which things are since put is rather to be justified, as tending to reduce us unto the old; as on the other hand, if the Lord has not yet brought forth that which he intended in his mighty Works among us, and has further things to do, this may be a foundation of encouragement unto all the Friends and Followers of Christ, to proceed in their former Faith, Fervency, Prayer, and in all suitable wayes and means for the help and furtherance thereof, notwithstanding the unbelief, opposition, and advantage of present visible proceedings contrary thereunto.

The grounds we have to hold out for our belief and hope in this thing, that God hath been, and is in these dayes, doing some new and extraordinary things, are,

First, A freshness of spirit that hath been among us: *Zech. 4. 6. Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts*: The experience of former and latter Ages may tell us, that God has had his times of going away and returning to his Place, leaving his People and the World without any visible tokens or eminent appearances of his Power, in such seasons the Spirit has run low and faint, only in such a measure as might preserve his People in a life of conflict and warfare; and his times of coming forth again out of his Place, when he has had some new work to do, and then has he alwayes given a new and fresh Spirit, suitable to the work he had in hand: It is said, 1 *Sam.* 16. 13, 14. *The Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward, but the Spirit of the Lord departed*

parted from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him. The like was seen in our dayes: While the Lord took away his Spirit from many Wise, Mighty, and Noble among us, and sent darkness, famine, and withering into their hearts, and confusion upon their counsels; at the same time he put a Spirit of Faith and Power upon a despised sort of men, which was as marrow and fatness to their bones. There is a word in *Isaiah* 10. 27. *The yoak shall be destroyed because of the anointing.* The principal end and effect of the divers and sundry Dispensations of Spirit, which God has renewed to former Generations, at least in later times, has been to regain unto Christ and his Church, out of the hands of Antichrist, some of those rights and concernments, which during the long time of darkness and tyranny, have been concealed, or forcibly detained from them: The like effect had that Spirit that was put upon a People among us: Many pretious Truths and Priviledges, the light and comfort whereof was denyed to our fore-fathers, were discovered, and many heavy yokes of spiritual and civil bondage, long continued upon their necks, were broken and destroyed by that Spirit that remained among us: Oh what blessedness did this Spirit bring with it, if it be but remembred, what light and certainty it gave of the presence of God with us? what discerning of the time? what a strong savour and relish of spiritual things? and what earnest longings and pressings after a better state of things built upon the foundations of Righteousness and Truth? The clear shining forth of new Covenant light out of the former mists of Antichristian obscurity, was that which begot this Spirit in the hearts of many; the setting up of Christ in the more full and unlimited exercise of his Kingly Power and Authority over all things, both in Church and Nation, was that end it pressed after; the taking out of the way all Parties and Interests that had or might hinder the obtaining of this end, was that work it was with much zeal and success exercised about: Such a freshness of spirit was never, nor can it be conceived was of late given forth, but in order to the ushering in some new and further work into the World.

Secondly, The works of Providence drawn out in a continued line and series of deliverances unto a praying People, next

unto thoſe inward impreſſions of the quickening Spirit, are a ſignal teſtimony unto us, that God is doing ſome new and better thing in the World: When the Works of God in a Nation grow up to that height and eminency, as like a tide to bear down all before them; then they are to be obſerved and heeded as ſignes and tokens, as the Voice of God unto that people, ſignifying what are his preſent Counſels and Works he is determined to do: It is ſaid in the *Pſalm* 105. 26,27,28. *He ſent Moſes his ſervant, and Aaron whom he had choſen, they ſhewed his ſignes among them, and wonders, in the Land of Ham: He ſent darkneſs and made it dark, and they rebelled not againſt his Word:* The Signs God wrought for *Iſrael* upon *Egypt*, and his Appearances for them in the Wilderneſs, did ſhew, that the time of their Redemption was come, that he would bring them to the promiſed Reſt: Once it was that the Lord kept us under a low condition of ſpirit, faith and courage, and as to the outward Man under a ſtate of ſubjection and ſuffering, under the heavy yoaks of the Antichriſtian Task-maſters, and for a long time held his peace, leaving us without any ſignes and tokens in a viſible way; then was a time for us to ſit ſtill, things being dark while the Lord was ſilent; but having been ſince raiſed up into hopes and expectations, that a day and time of great things was at hand, and this not the work of fancies, but of the Spirit, of Faith and Prayer, upon the foundation of glorious Promiſes; and God alſo having gone before us in many eminent appearances one upon another, all tending to make way for the bringing in ſome better thing then yet is ſeen: This is unto us, one among other, the ſober and good grounds we have, to proceed in prayer and waitings for that Excellent State of things to break forth, whereof ſome former taſtes and glimpſes we have had already, the preſent interruption and ſtop put upon the work to the contrary notwithſtanding. *Iſaiah* ſaith, *Chap.* 43. 3. *I gave Egypt for thee, Ethiopia and Sheba for thee*: May it not be ſaid, that the Lord gave whole Nations into our hands, and all thoſe parties that roſe up one after another, upon this account, becauſe they ſet themſelves againſt a Cauſe and People that God had among us? Let us but obſerve who all thoſe that have appeared in evill will and deſigns againſt this Cauſe, have been ſadly left of God, unto darkneſs,

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and waſting in their ſpirits, counſels and proceedings, the very report whereof put a fear upon the Nations about, while he owned, and bleſſed, and comforted his People, by a glorious leading Preſenceamong them: What is the meaning of theſe things? Is there not a far other more Excellent State of things ſignified, and intended hereby, then the preſent frame of things of late ſet up, under which worldly pomp and policy, the old oppreſſive and corrupt Intereſts of former worldly States and Governments, with a too general defection of many from their firſt light, love, and purity, is ſpringing and growing up again in the Land.

The changes that of late have paſſed over us, are a further Teſtimony from God unto us, that he is doing ſome new thing in the Earth: It is ſaid, *Gen.* 49. 10. *The Scepter ſhall not depart from Judah, nor a Law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come.* The firſt coming of our Saviour was uſhered in by a change upon all Nations, the *Romans* poſſeſſing themſelves of the Kingdome of *David*, and of the Government of the whole World: *Joel* ſaith, *chap.* 2. 30, 31. *I will ſhew wonders in the Heavens, and in the Earth, bloud, and fire, and pillars of ſmoak; the Sun ſhall be turned into darkneſs, and the Moon into bloud, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come:* We are to know the ſecond coming of the Lord Jeſus to ſet up his Kingdom on Earth draws near, when we ſee changes coming upon the whole frame of things, both in Church and State: This Nation, a Nation wherein Profeſſion is reformed unto the greateſt degree of Light and Purity of any Nation in the World; yet how has it been turned upſide down? How have the Heavens of our more reformed, as well as the Earth of our more looſe corrupted Church-ſtate been ſhaken? How has the Sun of Monarchy, Kings and Nobles, been darkened, and the Moon of our Civil State been turned into bloud? How have formes of Government, and Authorities, haſtily riſen up one after another, and have as faſt diſſolved in weakneſs and confuſion: *Revel.* 21. 1. *I ſaw a new Heaven and a new Earth, for the firſt Heaven and the firſt Earth were paſſed away, and there was no more Sea:* When the Governments, Kingdoms, and Common-wealths, throughout both the Antichriſtian and the more Reformed Nations, become

come unsettled, shaken, and falling in pieces; it is a sign they are grown old in sin and guilt, and as fit for no more use are ready to be done away: The time for the fulfilling of that Prophesie seems at the very door, *Revel.* 14. 15. *Thrust in thy sickle and reap, for the time is come for thee to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.* Who ever saw the Nations round about us in such a posture of warr and wrath as at this day, so fitted for destruction? What Earthquakes, Eclipses, Comets, raining of Bloud, and raging Pestilences, have there been of late? How is the whole Creation sensible of the drawing near of the Lord Jesus, whose coming in the Spirit of Grace and Glory in his People, and in Wrath and Judgements against his Enemies, is that which causeth all these changes which have been, and are yet to be in the World.

It is well known to many, that both the spiritual and visible Interest of Christ hath begun to shine forth more of late in this Nation, and God hath given more visible testimonies in a way of owning of it here then in any other Nations besides: So soon as this Interest and Cause was placed among us, what a series of changes did presently flow in upon us? What commotions were stirred up against us from abroad? and how are all the Nations about us since put into a flame? Nations long settled upon their lees of Antichristian blindness and corruption, when God begins to empty such from vessel to vessel, to bring upon them one breach and change after another, it is a sign he has some new and special thing to do with such People: Oh that we might see the Lord Jesus, as he comes forth through these things, and lifts up himself still more and more by them.

The Refinings that have attended our changes have a fresh significancy with us, that God is about some new and extraordinary things among us; every change was as a fire purifying the succeeding parties into a more refined Spirit and Principles, then those that were before; as new work and new difficulties were presented, while many went off, their hearts failing them, through darkness, weariness, or fear, a new Spirit was put upon others in a fresh supply of light and strength, giving a more piercing sight into the excellency of the interest

and

and cauſe in hand, and further Reſolution to preſſe forwards towards it.

Principles in the beginning of the day were dim and weak, both in the Civil and Military Inſtraments, carrying them forth a little higher then unto the Intereſt of meer civil right and freedome, againſt the Arbitrarines and exceſs of Monarchy and Prelatical Church ſtate; theſe Generations being moſt of them laid aſide, a choicer People were raiſed up in their place, of clearer Principles and higher Aymes, calling for Impartial Juſtice, removal of burdens, dethroning of Kingly Power, abolition of Worldly Pomps and Splendour, a Religious Magiſtracy, a Spiritual Miniſtry, liberty of Worſhip, &c. they had ſo much light, as to diſcern the preſent frame of things to be exceedingly corrupted with Antichriſtian mixture, and to ſee there was a better ſtate of things to be had framed and acted, not according to Humane Reaſon, and *Prudentials of State*, in the hands of men, as men, but according to the Decrees and Laws of Chriſt, in the hands of men, as ſpiritual and Saints.

Further, changes ſo far heightened this Principle, as that the Intereſt and Right of Jeſus Chriſt, to exerciſe a Kingly Authority over the Kingdomes of men, was publickly and ſolemnly owned for a reaſon among us; let it be obſerved, how the Lord winnowed and purged one party after another; how the ſaid old, dark, and corrupt faſhion of things was a going away, and a new face of things began to appear with a new luſtre, both upon Church and State, upon Doctrine and Worſhip; garments of mourning and bondage formerly upon the People of God, changed into a ſtate of liberty and gladneſs; a looſe and worldly Church reformed firſt to the letter, after to a degree of ſpirituality; the conteſt begun for a civil Intereſt, refined into a conteſt for ſpiritual Faith, Prayer, and expectations in many riſing higher and higher, firſt for civil liberty, then for a ſpiritual, after for the Kingdom and Government of Jeſus Chriſt: And here that word may not unſeaſonably be minded, *Pſal.* 68. 13, 14. *Though ye have lain among the pots, yet ſhall ye be as the wings of a Dove covered with ſilver, and her feathers with yellow gold; when the Almighty ſcattered Kings in it, it was white as ſnow in Salmon*; When the time came, that the Lord would ſcatter and bring down all thoſe Authorities,

rities, Powers, and Parties, that had held his Church in this Nation at the Brick-kills, in the condition of Servants and Bond-men, then did he take off our filthy garments, and clothed us with change of Rayment, high Reformation, Victories, and many visible Testimonies of his Presence among us, and all these as Earnests or first-fruits of that flourishing State, which shall be brought forth in the Coming and Kingdom of the Lord Jesus.

In *Israels* Redemption out of *Egypt*, mention was first made of a civil Interest only, of their deliverance from the burdens and oppressions of that King, but the principal thing intended was, that God himself would be their King: If this was a typical *Preludium* of the State of the Church in these last dayes, as that Prophesie seems to imply, *I will restore thy Judges as at first, and thy Counsellors as at the beginning*: If so, then a deliverance from the yoaks of Tyranny and Persecution, unto a condition of meer outward liberty and quiet, was not the chief Result in ended us in our changes, but that God would thereby bring us both Church and State under a more immediate Government to his Son, that he alone should be our Law-giver, King, and Judge, ruling us according to his own Word and Spirit, not according to the Prudentials and Policies of this World: If the Lord has thus kindled a Refining fire among us, let us take heed how we quench it, till our purification, thereby preparing us unto that Kingdom and Glory that is drawing near.

The Lord hath taken new and extraordinary wayes with us; besides that peculiar eye that hath watched over the English Nation, in former times, to save it from the bloud-thirsty Rage of Antichristian Adversaries, their Invasions from abroad, and Conspiracies at home: God has of late made this Nation, as it were, a Stage, whereupon he came forth, and began that Cup of the Wine of his Wrath against the Kingdomes and Monarchies of *Babylon*, that is determined against them; here began the Horns of Antichrist to be thrown down; here the spiritual and civil Liberties and Rights of Saints and Men were more visibly owned of God, against the Injustice and Usurpations of Ecclesiastical and Temporal Rulers, then had been before; here the Office of Christ, as Prophet and Head of his Church,

was

Was vindicated and advanced above the Commandements and Laws of Men to the contrary. The Authority of Christ, as King of Saints and Nations, and the right of Saints with him to Rule and Judge the World, has gained more Reputation and acceptance with us then all the World over: God speaks concerning his Church in the latter dayes, *Isai.* 43. 18. *Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old, behold I will do a new thing:* And what was that new thing? *For your sakes I have sent to Babylon, and have brought down all their Nobles,* ver. 19. *I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert,* Chap. 44. 3. *For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine off-spring:* The Lord had a People among us, who he formed for his praise; how did he for their sake bring down our Princes and Nobles, the paramours and Lovers of *Babylon?* How was our Land, which had layen like a wilderness for want of Gospel light and administration of Justice, turned into Rivers of water, through Righteousness, Knowledge, and the Presence of the Lord, shining forth among us? And in that day what a sprinkling of the Spirit was there upon the dry ground, upon many Sons and Daughters among us, of simple and low capacities, weak and foolish things, whereby many wise, mighty, and honorable, were put to confusion, and brought to nothing? Let us call to mind what a Presence was with us in the fields; what impulsions of the Spirit, as of a mighty wind, were upon many, carrying them up, beyond themselves, through difficulties and dangers? What a Spirit of Judgment was put upon many, to bind Kings in chains, and Nobles in fetters of iron? What a light of the Gospel of the Glory of Christ shined round about us? What meltings and yernings were seen throughout all, even the darkest corners of the Land, under the sense of a crucified Saviour? What Lightenings among the People of God, and what Earthquakes upon their Enemies? Such things as made us a terror and wonderment to all the Nations about us; speak oh ye Virgins that are fallen asleep, if these be ordinary Dispensations, if ye have read or heard of a parallel? if not, then look upon them, as beginnings of greater things yet to come to passe.

But if any shall say; *Why may not this glory set in a cloud, as great things were done, and as great hopes and expectations raised in* Germany, *yet all came to nothing.*

I answer; *Luther* lived to see his Doctrine prevailed over many Cities and Countries, and soon after his death brake out the Warr in that Nation, for the punishment of them that were Adversaries to the Gospel; when that Light was quenched there, it sprung forth with renewed strength in this our Island, and has ever kindled such a fire, as has at sundry times consumed the chiefest part of the Riches, strong Holds, and Yoaks of Antichrist that were among us.

God has begun the influences and effects of some of the last and glorious Promises in our Nation; Providences and Prophesies have been as teeming wombs, bringing forth the first fruits of great things amongst us: The Promises that concern the Church of Christ, towards the end of her wilderness state, do speak of great changes and revolutions to come to passe about that time in the Antichristian States and Kingdoms, with their Governments and Affairs, that by these tempests this old corrupt frame of things may be broken, and fall, and way made for a glorious State of things, to be brought forth in the fuller exaltation of Jesus Christ; *A Stone shall be cut out without hands, that shall smite the great Image upon his feet: Upon the servants and upon the hand-maids in those dayes will I pour out my Spirit, and these shall hate the Whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire; then the earth shall reele to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage, and the Lord shall punish the Hoast of the high ones that are on high, and the Kings of the earth upon the earth: Then the Moon shall be confounded, and the Sun ashamed.* If these Promises have begun their effects upon us in this Nation, then let us know, that the way of the Lord amongst us is new, and his work extraordinary; let us remember what a sprinkling of a gracious choice and active Spirit has been among us: what excellent things were done while it was fresh upon us? How Monarchy and Prelacy was cut off, as out of the horns of Antichrist? How the Stone has been at work among us, whereby that whole Church and State, with the pomp, power, and greatness of it was overturned? What parties and instruments were

laid

laid aside, as being short of spirit for the business of that day? and what Laws, Constitutions, and Customs were cast off, as Antichristian, and opposite to the work then in hand: Add to all these, what a mighty Witness of God unto all these proceedings in a continued series of Salvations and Victories over all that rose up against us; and then may we not conclude, That the things that were then on foot among us, were the first fruits and earnests of those precious Promises, and not (as too much cause has of late been given to say) the productions of policy, headiness or delusion; to say nothing, what most deep and sweet impressions were upon our hearts from the word of promise concerning the Kingdom of Christ, and downfal of *Babylon*, we have had two observable signs, that the time, or the Promise, wherein the Lord will do great things, is at hand; the one is a most peculiar and distinguishing presence of the Lord, by inward Refreshings of Spirit, and outward Dispensations of Mercy, which was with us whilst our hearts went after the Lord; and our Principles and Proceedings were in a subserviency to his Cause and Kingdom; when others, whose aims and ends were more National and mixt with worldly interest, were laid aside, left in the dark, and under visible rebukes. So great a difference has the Lord made between these, who sat down in a meer civil and worldly Reformation, and others, who pressed after better hopes, (*viz.*) the fulfilling of Promises, and a full subjection of all things to the Word and Spirit, must needs be taken for a singular Evidence to give light unto us, which way the work and design of the Lord lies at this day. The other sign is, the sad clouds of displeasure that are now upon us; that gracious and lively presence that brought us out from our former Egyptian darkness and slavery, and by a strong hand led us through many dark and difficult paths in the beginning of the day, is much departed from off our Councils, Camp, & solemn Assemblies; Laws are given unto us that are not good, and Statutes whereby we cannot live; our Rulers are many of them such as know not *Joseph*, the faithful Servants of Christ, such as had no heart unto or communion with that great Affair and Interest of Christ once on foot; the Military Power, which was as a new sharp threshing Instrument against us: *Babylon* is now become a prey to the Heathen, or as Hirelings under a forreign Prince;

the cauſe and truth once ſo dear and highly owned, now as to any viſible progreſs of it, under a ſentence of death, ſo that we may ſay, we have ſown much, and bring in little; we looked for much, and lo it comes to little; the Lord hath blown upon it, becauſe his Houſe lies waſt. *Haggai* proved to *Iſrael*, That the viſible diſcountenance that was upon all their publick and private concernments, from the Lord, was a ſign, That the time was come, that the Lords Houſe ſhould be built; even ſo clouds of diſpleaſure from God returning again, after ſuch a morning of ſucceſſes and bleſſings as has been upon us, ought to be a ſign unto us, that the Lord hath great things yet to do among us; and that it is time for us to awake, and go on with the Work that has been begun among us.

Now let us enquire what Works the Lord is about, and wherein his Saints ſhould be found waiting upon him at this day; there are ſome Rules, which in this Point have given light unto the Church of God in former Ages, and lately in our time, and may be further uſeful to us in this day for our ſatisfaction herein.

Firſt Rule. The Word, upon which we were made to hope in the day of our greateſt difficulties and ſtraits, and in the ſtrength and comfort wherein we ſuffered ſo many things; when God ſets it upon the heart of his People to wait for ſome word, ſome ſpiritual Promiſe to be made good, and to undergo many things for the obtaining thereof, that is the Work of that day; God made a Promiſe to *Abraham* four hundred and fifty years afore it came to paſſe, when the time of the promiſe drew nigh, God put it upon *Moſes* heart; after him upon *Joſhuah*, to go up and poſſeſs the good Land. *David* had a Word that he ſhould be King, he bore up himſelf upon this word through a long ſeries of conflicts and troubles, till the things was done. In the late Warrs, thoſe who bare the burden and heat of that day, had a Word, whereupon they leaned, which conſiſted of many Promiſes, ſhewing a more full and glorious Reformation to be ſet up in the World, wherein Jeſus Chriſt in all his Offices, Laws, and Commands, ſhould be more viſibly owned, and exalted, and *Babylon* in all her intereſts thrown down: This was that Word that was a Guide and a Strength to many among us in the troubles and perplexities of

that

that day; and not the Policy and Power of this World.

Second Rule. Observe of what nature were these breathings of the Spirit, and the impressions that were wrought thereby upon the most enlightened, faithful and praying part of the People, while we were following God in the way of his Judgements among us; the Work God is about begins in the heart of his People, for if the Secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; when a People are in the Work of God, following Jesus Christ through many sore Tryals and hardships, then observe what things in that day lay with most weight upon their hearts, and what the stirrings and movings of the Spirit with the Word were then amongst them, and there the Work of God lies: *Psalm* 102. 13, 14. *Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Sion, for the time to favour her, yea the set time is come, for thy Servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof*: When God begins to awake the spirit of his People, to call them out of their darkness, security, and carnal interests, and puts upon them a gracious sense of the condition of *Sion*, and to look, and long, and cry to the Lord for her building up, then is the time at hand; 1 *Chron.* 11. When the Lord would turn the Kingdom from the House of *Saul* unto *David*, then he stirred up all *Israel* to come and make *David* King: It may be observed, whilst the Spirit of the Lord remained in the lively and fresh gales and actings of it upon our publick Instruments, and Camp, Council, and Assemblies, there was such a sense upon their hearts, that the Kingdom of Christ might be promoted both in Civils and Spirituals, and the remaining posts and pillars, all the limbs and branches of Antichristianisme, might be broke to pieces, and carried them with a lively zeal and courage through all oppositions, difficulties, and temptations in that day to the contrary.

Third Rule. Consider which way the Works of Providence looked, that were formerly done amongst us, and whither they tended, though Providence, when it is alone, is not any certain Rule to go by; yet when the Works of God and his Word and Spirit go altogether, when a People have his Word and Spirit stirring them up unto a Work, and Providences coming in one upon another to carry them out in it, then are Providences to

be

be heeded, as signs of the times, and of the Work God is about; *Psalm* 105. 26. *He sent Moses his Servant, and Aaron whom he had chosen, they shewed his signs among them, and wonders in the Land of Ham.* The Works God wrought for *Israel* in *Egypt* and the Wilderneſſe, was as Gods manifeſtation to the Nations, who were his People, and what he was about; when a People are engaged in a cauſe upon holy and righteous Principles, the Promiſes, Prophecies and Truths of the latter dayes, and God is ſeen going forth before them, working glorious Deliverances for them, this is a lowd Teſtimony: What is the Work God is determined to do in ſuch a day? *Psalm* 105. 14, 15. *He ſuffered no man to do them wrong, yea he reproved Kings for their ſakes, ſaying, touch not mine Annointed, and do my Prophets no harm:* How like to this the dealing of God with *England* of late have been may appear, whoſoever ſhall remember what an eye of peculiar reſpect and favour the Lord had upon a People among us, what a choice and bleſſed Spirit a deſpiſed People had, whereby many wiſe and honourable among us were confounded? What power to bind Kings in chains, and Nobles in fetters of iron? How no weapon that was formed againſt them could proſper: Moreover how the Lord ſtretched the line of confuſion and the ſtones of emptineſſe over all ſuch conſtitutions and intereſts as had been props and pillars for the upholding the old Antichriſtian and worldly pomp, pride and greatneſſe; if the aim and tendencie of theſe Providences be conſidered, it is eaſie to gheſſe what the Work of God is at this day.

Fourth Rule. Take notice what things have fallen out upon a People among us ſince they left the Work of the Lord, they were firſt about, to build their own houſes, ſince they left their firſt love, and labour, and patience, and zeal in that Work, and are joyned to another Intereſt: As ſoon as *Saul* failed in the Work of the Lord, 1 *Sam.* 16. 14. *The Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil ſpirit from the Lord troubled him:* That Spirit he had for the Lord, and the work of Reformation, left him, and he was turned to hate the ſame Spirit when it came upon *David*: It is a true obſervation, where the Spirit of God is ſeen in the moſt gracious, lively and warmeſt workings of it, there are the choiceſt Servants of God, and there is his

Work

Work carrying on. What a bleſſed Spirit was there upon a People among us? What zeal did it work? what indignation? what godly ſorrow for miſcarriages? what purging of themſelves from the old leaven? what preſſing on towards a thorow Reformation, and the good things of the latter dayes, how is this Spirit (I would I could not ſay it) departed from them.

Object. *But wherein does it appear that that Spirit has left them?*

Anſw. It appears by their principles and deſigns; the Spirit of God acts upon holy and gracious Principles, and unto holy and noble ends; a People led by the Spirit of God do act upon ſuch Principles as are ſpiritual, the Word of God, Faith in the Promiſes, Love to Chriſt, to his Saints, to the breathings of the Spirit in them, to Righteouſneſs and Holineſs; now where you ſee theſe Principles left and ſlighted, and others took up, worldly power, and pollicy, and conjunction with them, that either left the Work formerly, or were enemies to it, and practiſes tending to pour contempt upon the bleſſed Cauſe and Intereſt of Chriſt among us, and upon all thoſe that would ſtill be faithful to it, untill the Kingdomes of this World become the Kingdome of our Lord; this is not the Spirit of God you may be aſſured, that does ſuch things: The ſpirits of any thing are known by the breath or ſavour it yeilds; *Thou ſavourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of man*: where we find a ſtrong ſcent and ſavour in our own hearts, or others, of the fl ſh-pots, and onyons, an hankering after the treaſures of *Egypt*, the pomp, preferments, titles, and honors, the conſtitutions and intereſts of thoſe that the Lord caſt out before us, to be like the Nations, in Government, State, Deſigns, and Manners, there we may fear the Spirit of the Lord, as to any further work, is departed: Moreover ſince many left off following the Lord fully, we ſee not our ſigns and tokens of Gods wonder working Providence as formerly; *Exod.* 33. 16, *Wherein ſhall it be known here, that I and thy People have found grace in thy ſight, is it not in that thou goeſt with us, ſo ſhall we be ſeparated, I and thy People, from all the People that are upon the face of the earth*: Whilſt there was a People among us that were faithful with the Lord and his Saints, and had a heart to the glorious things God hath for his

Church.

Church, the Lord Jesus went forth before them as General, and put the fear of them upon all that were about them: but since then, what frowns from Heaven? what tokens of displeasure have been upon us both at Sea and Land? whereby all things drive heavily, at home fears and confusion, abroad wasting and consuming upon their Armies; now observe, in what walk and way we had the Lord present among us, and how since then he has withdrawn himself from us, and thence we may gather where his Work lies at this day.

Now then if you judge these Rules to be such, as may give any certain light to resolve us in the question; The Work the Lord our God is about at this day is a choice Work, and a great Work, and beyond the ordinary wayes and Dispensations of God in times past.

First, The Lord is forming a People for himself, purifying and fitting a People to follow Christ in those special Services, wherein his Glory is more eminently concerned; if the Works that God has done in the midst of us be in order to some greater things he has yet to do, then will he sanctifie and prepare a People that shall understand the Work of the Lord, and serve him therein; *Psal.* 110. 2. *Rule thou in the midst of thine Enemies, thy People shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness*: They that shall be of the most ready and willing spirit to serve Christ in the Work of his Kingdom, shall be a People of more grace and holiness then others, a People that shall have Faith and Love to Christ, and Zeal for his Kingdom, and Glory, burning more upon their hearts then others have. The Promises shew of this thing frequently; *Isai.* 4. 3. *And it shall come to passe, that he that is left in Sion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem*: When the Lord is about to establish his Church above all Mountains, all other Kingdomes and People in the World, he will first cause them to separate and come out from the sins and uncleannesses of the World, and will make them a People fitted to enjoy the glory of that day, to be as Saviours upon Mount *Sion*, and to judge the Mount of *Esau*: The Warrs and changes that have been among us call for this too, they have been as fires to purifie us from our sins and Idols, though many are since gone back to commit fornication with them

them again: The desolations and troubles that do at this time threaten the Nations all about us, seem to be as signes and tokens to all that are wise-hearted among us, to prepare to meet the Lord Jesus in his Judgements; he is above, when ye see these things begin to come to passe, then lift up your heads and look up.

This will be better understood, by making a more particular enquiry, what manner of Work that is, wherein God will fit his People, and make them ready to follow Jesus Christ in the things he is about:

First, We may look that he will put another spirit upon his People then that is, which is generally found at this day among the People of God; a chosen People, a picked People become those Works God has promised to do in the latter dayes: If an Honorable Person had a Negotiation which concerned his Honour and Estate, he would employ such Persons about it, as would become such a Master, and of abilities for such a Service: Or if a great Prince were about to shew himself openly, to be seen before his Subjects, he would choose a Train of such Persons, to attend upon him, as should set off the glory and splendor of his Royal person before the people: The Works wherein the Lord Jesus will glorifie himself, and be more eminently exalted, he will choose such choice and precious Saints and Servants to be about him therein, as that by the Grace and Blessedness which they shall shew forth, his Glory shall shine forth the more; there is so much dross and Tin mingled with our Gold, so much of worldly spirit, in excess, pomp, designs, seeking and receiving honour and promotions; so much of a carnal frame, in debates, envyings, stripes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults; and so much of an Antichristian spirit is found among us, in joyning interests with *Babylon*, confederacies with her Kings, building up again her horned power, hankering after her customes, manners, laws, worldly splendor and greatness, that whilst we are in such a condition as this, God will commit no eminent or special service or trust unto us; such a people are not in a condition, fit to attend upon the Lord Jesus in his great Works he has to do among us: Whilst the People of God among us were seeking after some better things in the Spirit of Grace, with Faith, Singleness, and Purity, the Lord

was among them by a very gracious and wonderful Presence, but sith they have left their first Loves, and have forgot their first Works, and are sat down in the middle way, the Lord is seeking a People of another spirit, who will follow him fully in the Works he has promised to do in these last days: Now we may know such a People, a People of another spirit, where the following characters are found.

1. In dayes of division and distemper, of corruption and falling away from their first Love, fervency of Spirit, the simplicity, savour and Spirit of Christ, and Gospel-conformity, unto security and rest; from whence come uncleanness, lasciviousness, strife, wrath, and heresies; a People that in such dayes are growing in their Light, love, Purity, and Zeal for Christ, his Work and Kingdom, are a People of another Spirit, of such a Spirit as the Lord seeks for, for such a Spirit was *Paul*, and some few in his time.

2. After a Reformation has begun in the Churches of God, when the old leaven the constitutions and customes made in the time of Antichristian blindness and Idolatry are establisht and kept up among them; or when a People in a Nation, who were coming out of *Babylon*, delivered from the yoaks, and by a great deal of conviction, through many wonders of providence, called to come out of the corruptions of the World, shall return back again to bondage, either by confederacies with *Babylons* friends, mingling with their manners, or taking the golden wedge, if in such dayes as this there be any that continue in their love and zeal to Jesus Christ, his Kingdom, a thorow Reformation of things, until all power be put into his hands, and do shew forth the same, by following all holy and righteous wayes and means, for the promoting thereof in the World, such are a people of another spirit; such a spirit as this was in *Elijah*, *Phineas*, *David*, *Nehemiah*, and some others in their time, and in the worthy Reformers of later times: *Zech.* 12. 10. *I will pour upon them the spirit of grace and supplication, and they shall look upon me who they have pierced and shall mourn for him:* The Lord will have such a people as shall be deeply affected with Christ, and with a sense of the dishonor and reproach that lies upon him, his cause and interest in these last times.

3. When the ſigns of the times are not diſcerned nor heeded, nor the Works and Mind of God pointed at thereby is not cloſed withall, a great ſecurity and unbelief, and a lazy lukewarm indifferency, generally prevailing, as to the things which concern the promiſed Kingdom and Glory of Chriſt, and the overturning of all that which letteth; whoſoever ſhall then be found upon their watch, in ſupplications and ſearchings, mourning for the ſins of the times, refuſing to bow to the Kings Image, opening their window towards *Jeruſalem*, that is, praying for the Redemption of the Church of Chriſt, and enquiring out the time, ſuch are a people of another ſpirit, ſuch a people the Lord ſeeks for, as a people fit to follow him, & wait upon him; of ſuch an excellent ſpirit was *Daniel*, and the men of *Iſſachar*, *Noah*, *Jeremiah*, and others: As he is a man of a mean, low, baſe ſpirit, that can be content Chriſt ſhould have a little place in his heart, and the old Man a great deal, ſo it is a note of a people of a low and unworthy ſpirit, not fit for any eminent ſervice for Chriſt, that are content with a little of Chriſts Righteouſneſs and Reformation in a Nation, well ſatisfied ſo they may live in peace, and eaſe, and plenty, though Chriſt have not the ſwaying, over-ruling power in the publick and higheſt matters that are done among them: When a deep ſleep of ſecurity in preſent things has taken hold upon many, then to have the eyes open, and heart awake, preſſing forward towards things before, is a ſign of a people of another ſpirit.

4. A people that follow the Lord fully which way ſoever he goes, that whilſt others are taken off by fear of difficulty, worldly advantage, or ſome cunning pretences, will not be prevailed with to decline or caſt off the Lord and the Work he is about, ſuch are a people of another ſpirit; whilſt Rulers, Army and Churches were all as one for the Work of the Lord Jeſus among us, and many outward ſucceſſes and incouragements were caſt in, and the owning thereof was the way to advancement in the World, an ordinary and common ſpirit might follow the Lord in ſuch a day; but when all theſe props and foundations are ſhaken, and the ſtreams of intereſts & affairs is turned into another channel, againſt the Work and Promiſe of God, then to be lovers and followers of the Lord Jeſus, his glorious Cauſe and Intereſt, when it lies under ſuch contempt and death,

as this is the Work of a very choice and excellent ſpirit; when the Spies returned, *Numb.* 13. 27. *They told Moſes, and ſaid, we came unto the Land, whither thou ſenteſt us, and ſurely it floweth with Milk and Honey, and this is the fruit of it; nevertheleſſe the people be ſtrong that dwell in the Land, and the Cities are walled, and very great; and moreover we ſaw the children of Anak there; and all Iſrael cryed and wept that night, and ſaid, let us make a Captain, and let us return into Egypt;* but *Caleb* and *Joſhua* were of another ſpirit: By the taſtes we have had of Goſpel light and Reformation, of the Government of Chriſt Kingdom of late, very many are ready to ſay, that the Land is good and pleaſant, for Gods People to be under a Government of Gods making, under Rulers of Gods annointing is bleſſed; as it is but a reaſonable thing; but this Kingdom (ſay they) being not of this World, will not be received nor ſubjected to by the World, nor can it be ſet up but by a ſhaking and pulling to pieces the Kingdomes of the World, as to the foundation they now ſtand upon; wherefore it being a buſineſs of ſo great trouble, difficulty, and danger, before it can be attained, let us make (ſay many among us) a Captain, and let us return into *Egypt*, or let us ſit down on this ſide *Iordan*, with the enjoyment of our eaſe and quiet, rather then ſeek or make out after ſuch a Kingdom with the loſſe of all: This is a low unworthy Spirit, having little love to the Glory and Excellency of Chriſt and his Kingdom; the Lord will prepare a People of another Spirit, that will ſtrengthen one another to go on, until all the Enemies of Chriſt and his People be put under our feet.

2. As the Lord will chooſe among his People ſuch as are of another Spirit, ſo he will have a People of more refined and excellent Principles then are commonly found among us; Principles are the ſprings of Actions, no man can act above his Principles; a man of gracious, noble, and refined Principles is appointed for ſome excellent ſervice and finer work then other men; now the excellency of a mans Principles lies in their ſpirituality, in how much they have of Chriſt and Grace above other men: A man that has more communion with God, with free-grace in Chriſt then others, is a man of more excellent Principles. Mens Principles cannot alwayes be judged by their Profeſſion, but their Profeſſion may be judged off by their Principles:

Principles: a man of low and servile Principles may make a great shew and high profession before the World, as *Israel* when brought out of *Egypt*, having received the Oracles, having seen great Wonders, no Nation like to *Israel*, yet had in them a strong sence and savour of *Egypt* still in their hearts, they went back to *Egypt*; so we of this Nation have been a People of great deliverances, under astonishing Dispensations, so that it was said of us, what Nation like to ours? what Mercies like to *Englands* Mercies? Yet we are generally of low, servile, slavish and fearful Principles, savouring much of that state whereunto we were first in Bondage; how and who in our Principles are below the Dispensations that have been upon us, and the work of God has further to do in the World, may appear by considering what Principles they are that do prevail most at this day among us.

1. They may be known what they are by our sitting down in an outward state of peace, quiet, and safety, well contented and at ease therein, while a full and thorow Reformation, and the Mercies promised to the Church in the latter dayes, are not sought after: *David* was of far other Principles, of a choicer Spirit, 2 *Sam.* 7. 1, 2. *And it came to passe, when the King sat in his house, and the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies; yet the King said unto Nathan the Prophet, See now, I dwell in an house of Cedar, but the Ark of God dwelleth within Curtains:* This Principle is wanting, where an outward deliverance and peace is so used and sat down in, as yet the Work of the Lord is not carried on; *Though thou hast lain among the pots, I will make thee as the wings of a Dove; I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean:* Great goodness is promised to the Church in the latter dayes, the Spirit of grace, deliverance, enlargement, dominion, and exaltation; these things were sought after by the People of God among us of late, and in pursuance thereof they went some dayes journeys, following the Lord through dark and dangerous paths, but are now sat down by the way, in a low, wearied, unbelieving, and slavish Spirit, having little or no spirit to the things formerly pressed after, *Gen.* 49. 14, 15. *Issachar is a strong Asse, couching down between two burthens: and he saw that rest was good, and the Land that it was pleasant, and bowed his shoulder to bear, and he became a servant*

unto

unto tribute: But *Dan shall judge his people as one of the Tribes of Israel:* In like manner after a little breathing space has been given us from our former troubles, finding that rest was good, and a condition of quiet and peace was sought, so that we might enjoy our ceiled houses, lands, offices, merchandizing, &c. how are many among us willing to put their necks again under the yoaks, and to deliver up, and let go the opportunity and power that was in their hands to have redeemed themselves, and to have raised up that Work and Building the foundation whereof was laid with the price of so much precious bloud.

But you will say, What is that Work that is to be carried on? It is said, the Iron was mixt without Clay; it should signifie the heathenish worldly Civil Power, and the Ecclesiastick State should mingle together, the Church should borrow many corrupt constitutions, customs, and helps from the wicked and worldly power; this mixture is yet found among us; the old leaven of Antichristian pollutions, manners, and proceedings that was begun to be purged out, is leavening us again, even the whole lump (if grace prevent not:) The Basis upon which God will set up his Kingdome, namely, the Word of God, as the Law and the Spirit of Christ in his Saints, as the Counsellor, is not admitted: *Ezra* 9. 14. *Should we again break thy Commandements, and joyn in affinity with the people of these abominations?* Whilst worldly aims and ends run along with the Work of Christ, he had many followers; but now that the God of this World hath given to many the golden Cup, whereby they are overcome in security and ease, to make another step in that Work, beyond what the present state of things will bear, such love and zeal is found but with few amongst us, this is a low unworthy Principle: If the blessed Reformers of former Ages, or more later of our times, who alwayes found every new step in Reformation to be attended with difficulty and opposition, had been of this low and unsearchable spirit, or could have been content for the enjoyment of their lives and liberties, ease and pleasures, with the losse of the Gospel and Reformation in the greater purity of it, we should instead of seeing the things we have seen in our dayes, have been inheriting the blindness and bondage of our forefathers: It is worthy to be remembred, while we were a people as one, standing upon an Interest di-

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ſtinct from all Nations about us, the Lord was graciously sought of us, and that his Preſence was nearer his wonderful Works declared, but ſince we have made peace with the Enemies of the Lord, this peace has pierced deeper into our ſides then ever their ſwords before could do; which puts me in mind of what is ſaid, *Dan.* 8. 25. *By peace he ſhall deſtroy many*: When Antichriſt ſaw he could not prevail among us by the ſword, through his policy he proſpers, and by peace, and eaſe, and quiet he deſtroyes many; wherefore the Lord will have a people of ſuch light, ſincerity and love, as will not be contented with the peaceable enjoyment of Wives, Children, houſes, Lands, Honors, or Preferments, until the Lord Jeſus in his Laws, Government, Spirit and Saints be exalted over all the Earth, and his glory above the Heavens.

2. Whilſt there is a ſetting up the Maxims and rules of worldly corrupt States and Kingdoms, yea though it were the moſt prudent and righteous Principles of (Civil) Intereſt, when this is done to keep down the Work God is about in our day, this is a ſign we are a People of Principles low and unſuitable to the Promiſes and Diſpenſations that we are under; as when the Kingdom of God comes into the heart, the moſt rational and refined Principles of Nature that were there before, muſt give place to the powerful convictions of Grace, and the light of the Spirit; ſo when the Kingdom of God is come forth viſibly in the World, the faſhion and frame of things in Kingdoms and Nations muſt paſſe away before it; and when God is about to do ſuch a Work as this, for any to inſiſt upon the moſt righteous and prudent Principles, to the hinderance of the Work of God, cannot be juſtified: *Exod.* 1. 9, 10, 11. *Behold, the people of the children of Iſrael are more and mightier then we, come on, let us deal wiſely with them, leſt they multiply, and it come to paſſe, that when there fall out any warr, they joyn alſo unto our enemies and fight againſt us, and ſo get them up out of the Land: Therefore they did ſet over them Task-maſters, to afflict them with their burdens*: Herein they exerciſed their Wiſdom of State againſt the Work God had in hand, and paid dearly for it: *Judg.* 8. 22. *The men of Iſrael ſaid unto Gideon, rule thou over us, both thou, and thy ſon, and thy ſons ſon alſo, for thou haſt delivered us from the hand of Midian.* What a more juſt and reaſonable thing could

could have been thought upon, and more conducing to common settlement and safety? But observe what answer was returned verse 23. *And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you, the Lord shall rule over you.* A noble and choice Spirit, he looked upon *Israel* as under Gods more immediate Government, and any other settlement by humane and worldly wisdom, however pretending to common good, was not by any means to be admitted: I shall add only one Instance more, *Numb.* 32. 5. *Reuben* and *Gad* said unto *Moses*, *Let this Land be given unto thy servants for a possession, and bring us not over Jordan:* Their desire was just and reasonable, for they had many Cattle, and it was a place for Cattle. But *Moses* answered, *Shall your Brethren go to war, and shall ye sit here*, verse 6. behold ye are risen up in your Fathers stead, an increase of sinful men: *Moses* having his eye upon the Work the Lord was about, would not indure that any Civil Interest, how publick or just soever, should be taken into any competition with the Lords Work, It was Reason of State that set up *Jeroboams* Calves for the preservation of the Kingdom; that erected the Romish Chair for preserving of unity in the Church and the peace of her Kings; that formerly imposed uniformity of worship and other laws upon the Conscience, and of late new Lords over the Church of God, all devised by the Man of Sin, thereby to put a check and stop upon the blessed Spirit of Christ, and work of Reformation, that both these might be kept under, and might not grow up to any considerable height, for fear of bringing in a change of things into the World: During the time of the Churches being in the Wilderness, Kingdomes, and States, and Churches have been left to be ordered by carnal Force and Policy, and at the best by the Rules of Morality and Civil Right; and these times of ignorance and corruption God winked at: But now that the Kingdomes of this World are about to become the Kingdomes of our Lord, and his Christ, it will be the wisdom of all that fear the Lord, to take heed of sitting down in, or contending for any wayes or interests, how just and prudent soever, against the Work and Word of Christ that is about to be fulfilled: When the Office and Right of Christ, as Prophet and Head of the Church, was brought to light in our dayes among us, what a blow was there given to that corrupt

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state that was before; so likewise when the Royal Prerogative of Christ, as King of Nations, began to be owned in the Government and publick Affairs among us, how the Lord stood by a despised remnant of his People therein, and how he left and laid aside all those that stick to their State Maxims, to their old Rules, Customs and bounds, to the hindrance of the Work then in hand is well known; wherefore the Lord will have his People purged from the old leaven of these low and carnal Principles, and that will not sit down in any Interest or settlement, how just or safe soever, whereby a stop is or may be put into the Work of God, in the exalting of his Son, in his Word, Works, and blessed Spirit among us.

3. That we are a People of Principles below the Works of God in our day, and unsuitable thereunto, may appear by the old pollutions entertained again, from which many seemed to have been purged; there is a corrupt mixture with this World, that has spread it self through the hearts and lives of most, and through the Ecclesiastical and Civil State, whereby that holy frame of heart, and work of Reformation, formerly among us, is much laid aside: A Church or People is said to be holy, when the Word of the Lord is their Law, and when they yield up themselves unto the Lord all one in all things, to be governed by his Commandements: And on the contrary, it is a People corrupted and unclean, when other Lords besides Christ have dominion over them, and the will and commandement of men is set up. The Church of the Old and New Testament in their beginning had more of this beauty of holiness and professed subjection unto the Lord only, then was ever seen since: *Moses* said of *Israel* concerning their first estate, *Deut.* 32. 12. *The Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange God with him:* though *he soon forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation:* So *Paul* said of the Church as it was in its first estate, before the Man of Sin had deflowered it; *I have espoused you to one Husband, that I may present you as a chaste Virgin to Christ*: A looking back unto these things, together with a measure of the Spirit, vouchsafed in our dayes, did work in the hearts of many among us strong convictions of much blackness and deformity, of many pollutions contracted from Antichrist, yet remaining upon us, and gave light and discerning of a more

holy reformed and happy estate, both commanded and promised; and upon this account was there a separation made among us as to Worship, first from Prelacy, then from the National way, and afterwards as to Government from Monarchy, Gods People being led all along herein, and pressed on from a Principle of Grace and Holiness, and from some light in the Promises, which speak of a day when every pot in *Jerusalem* and in *Judah* shall be holiness unto the Lord, and the Idols he shall utterly abolish. Whilst our hearts were under this holy and gracious frame, we were going on to purge out all such mixtures yet remaining among us, as were borrowed from corrupt and Antichristian States and Kingdomes, that we might become a new lump, a holy People, a righteous State, just Laws and all things reduced as near as might be unto the pattern; but instead of going on with these first Works, we are mingled again with the Idols and uncleannesses of former times, the sad effects whereof do appear almost every where upon the hearts and lives of most, and upon the Profession and Government that is held out in the Nation: This was the evil of the Church of old, *Psalm* 106. 35. They were mingled among the Heathen, and learned their works: *Hosea* 7. 8. *Ephraim he hath mixed himself among the people, Israel is a Cake not turned*: 2 Cor. 6. 14. *Be ye not unequally yoaked together with unbelievers, for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness; wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate*: When Gods People began to joyn with the World in Civils, they afterwards joyned with them in Spirituals, until the whole lump was leavened: The Reformers of the Church in former and latter times, their Zeal was stirred up against these minglings, both in doctrine and manners, against the inventions and commandments of men in the one, against worldly pomp, pleasures, and sensuality in the other: Religion cannot be accommodated to interest and respects of policy and serving turns; it cannot be mixt with error, no more then oyl with water, iron and steel with clay, *Dan* 2. 43. It is said, 2 *Kings* 17. 33. the mingled people of *Samaria feared the Lord, and served their Gods after the manner of the Nations*: But what saith God, doth he approve of this mixture? verse 34. God will not own his own commanded Worship, when mingled and compounded with another. [*Dr. Preston.*] Wherefore be-

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fore the Lord will go on with any further eminent Mercies for his People, he will have a People that shall purge out this old leaven from among them, that they may be a holy lump, as it is said, *Numb.* 23. 9, *Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the Nations.*

Another part of that Work the Lord is about among us, is to call his People out from partaking in those sins that are more especially the sins of the time and of this Generation. God may have a People subject to many infirmities and failings, and yet such as have overcome the sins of the times: Although *Asa* had offended in divers things, yet as to the times, the heart of *Asa* was perfect all his dayes, 2 *Chron.* 15. 17. So there are many sins that may be spoken against without offence to the times, but the special sins of the Generation are overcome and reproved but by a remnant of another spirit. Now if we would rightly judge what are the sins of the times we live in, this may be propounded as a sure Rule; observe what have been the more eminent and special Dispensations and Works of God among us in our day, and such courses and proceedings among us, whether publick or private, as lie more directly crosse and contrary thereunto, are the special sins and evils of the time: This being admitted for a good Rule in this place, what are the special sins of the time, from which the Lord will have his People to come out of, and be separate from, will somewhat appear by the Conclusions following.

First, After the Lord has begun to wash away the filth of the Daughter of *Sion*, to purge the Church of Christ among us from the filth of Antichristianisme, and by overturning some great Pillars of the Antichristian Church and State, has begun a Reformation of things, according to the pattern of the Gospel and Scripture light, and also gave forth a portion of the Spirit for this Work, after such a day as this, to joyn our selves again with the people of those abominations, (as it is now at this day) by marriages, leagues, conjunction of their and our Vessels, by reviving and setting up again that old fashion of things in its constitutions, customes, worldly policies, pomp, greatnes and lusts, this is one of the special sins of the times, and from which the Lord will have his People to redeem and separate themselves from, *Ezra* 9. 2. *The holy seed have mingled themselves with*

the people of those Lands, yea the hand of the Princes and Rulers hath been chief in this trespasse; and when I heard this thing I rent my garment: And this was the great sin of that time, and contrary to the Work of God in that day.

2. After that a publick and solemn Testimony has been born among us, through much blood and difficulties, and the same as eminently owned of God by a series of deliverances against the great oppressive interests that were upon us, to wit, the Law in the present constitution and administration of it, Monarchy as a thing unnecessary, burthensome, and dangerous, a Court as the spring head of oppression, pride and filthiness, with many other things that might be named, to lay these heavy yoaks again upon the necks of our Brethren, under which we our selves groaned not long ago, and thereby to sell the Lords People, with their dear bought power and freedom, the people of the Land, with their just rights and liberties, and the Cause it self so much contended for, into the hands of the new Lords, standing upon the old foundation, and acting in most points after the old corrupt fashion of things as formerly; this is a great sin of the times, for which the Lord cals upon his People to mourn and be humbled, and by withdrawing themselves as much as may be from such things, to bear a seasonable and faithful Testimony against them: The Nobles and Rulers of *Judah*, after they were delivered out of bondage in *Babylon*, oppressed their Brethren, and laid heavy yoaks upon them; this was a special sin of that time, and the Lord stirred up the spirit of *Nehemiah* against them: *Neh:* 5. 8. *And I said unto them, we, after our ability, have redeemed our Brethren the Iews, which were sold unto the Heathens, and will you even sell your brethren, or shall they be sold unto us? Also I said, it is not good that ye do, ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God, because of the reproach of the Heathen our enemies?* When God is breaking the yoaks of his People, to be then laying yoaks upon them, is a special sin of the time.

3. Many among us have sinned in taking the accursed thing; the meaning whereof, both in the Old and New Testament, imports a thing that is ordained of God to destruction, a People, or things of Gods Curse, shut out of Gods protection, and the prayers of his People. Now observe what things they were among us that Gods People did formerly cast out of their hearts,

hearts and prayers, that God did cast out from under his visible Dispensations of Mercy, that lay under his frowns and terrible dints of his displeasure, as things opposite to his Glory, the work of Reformation, and the prosperity and peace of his People, the mingling again with these things is a taking the accursed thing, and one of the sins of the times: *Ier.* 7 16. *Pray not thou for this people, neither lift up a cry nor prayer for them:* We may remember what the Lords choice and faithful Servants among us did formerly leave out, as things they could not pray for, what constitutions and interests in the State? what pomp, covetousness and excess among men in eminent place? what mixtures and formalitie in worship? and what Idols and humane Statues in Gods House? and are not these things, and that old Spirit that acted them, revived again, whereby the Lord has been provoked to bring a cloud upon us, and upon that day of Mercies and wonderful appearances, whereby his Work was carried on among us. So then observe, what things they are that the Lords more peculiar and praying People formerly, or at this day, under their more enlightened, holy and zealous frame could not, or do not pray for, but leave out, and separate themselves from, and they are that cursed thing which we ought to come out of and avoid.

4. The putting back of that blessed Work, that was in such a hopeful way to be carried on among us, is a great sin of the times; when I consider what an edge was upon the Spirits of good men, how quick and powerful were proceedings, what a spirit for high and great Work, a reforming spirit for Reforming work, a spirit of Judgment for the work of Justice, a spirit of Prayer for the breaking of all yoaks and deliverance of *Sion*, the whole Church of God, and what a seal Providence it self put upon all this in a series of wonderful successes; and further, that these things were come to that height, that the People of God begun to meditate and expect great things, men of low and common spirits were laid aside, the old spotted and wrinkled face of things, unholiness and formality in Religion; in the State, Monarchy its Friends and Paramours, with all its limbs and branches, and paintings begun to blush and hide it self; I say, when I look back at these things, and consider how all this Work is deserted and laid aside, covered under reproach, and buried out of sight and mind, and only a few left to keep it upon the heart, I

cannot

cannot but sadly reflect upon that word, *Hosea* 9. 1. *Rejoyce not O Israel for joy, as other people, for thou hast gone a whoring from thy God, thou hast loved a reward upon every corn-floor.* There is a nick of time, a special season, wherein God cals, and employes, and spirits people for his Work; if this time be not observed, both the Work and opportunity for it is lost, and things will go backward: When *Saul* slipped in the Work God had called him unto, he lost the Spirit of the Lord, and the work of his day also: So when *Israels* faith failed in the matter of the Spies, and in their hearts gave back from following the Lord, the Work was put back for forty years: in like manner let it be considered, what a door was opened, by the mighty Works of God among us, to have let in a season of Mercies, to have proceeded to a full and thorow Reformation, to have removed all lets and obstructions, and to have set the highest and most publick Interests and greatest Affairs upon another, a better basis and foundation then they had stood upon before, whereon the Interest of Christ, his Saints, his Word, as the Law and Rule, might have been eminently owned and exercised among us; the Promises, that the Saints shall take the Kingdom, and the Kingdom shall not be left to another People, calling upon all Gods People to have respect unto this, as the great Interest, to be above all other contended after; but they who had this price formerly in their hand, and an heart unto it, have let their opportunity slip, and that Spirit they had for this Work is departed, the work is gone many degrees back, and because of their and our sins, the good things that were in the birth are kept from us: When *Israel* desired a King, one might have pleaded for them, and said, they think no evil, they do but desire another form of Government, as more expedient for them then that of Judges: Nay but sayes the Lord, *They have rejected me that I should not reign over them*, 1 *Sam* 8. 7 They rejected the Dispensation it self they were under, as too holy and divine; this was their sin, they said, *Now make us a King to judge us like all the Nations*; they would not be a separate people, they would look like the Nations: Wise men do not look upon the change of persons, and names, and form of Government that has been among us, so much, as that the Dispensation we were under, in the very nature of it, as it was more holy, and spiritual, and refined, is rejected; nor the formality

mality only of the Work among us is altered, but the matter of it is gone, and another thing set up in its place, this is a sin of the times we ought to mourn over and avoid.

5. To name no more; the heart of the people of that part of the people that were forward and active in the Work is withered and sunk into a low and unsensible frame; an impotent, low and unworthy spirit is fallen upon many, willing to sit at ease, though in a low and slavish state, that can look upon the despised, deserted Cause and Interest of Christ without any trouble of heart, or a cry, or a prayer for it; there are but a few who have in them at this day those workings and yearnings of heart, in looking upon a crucified Cause, as *Mary* and the Disciples had over their crucified Friend the Lord Jesus: When any eminent work was to be done in *Israel*, the Lord first set it upon the hearts of some, and stirred up the spirit of the people unto it: Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest till he make *Jerusalem* a praise in the earth: The deliverance of the Church in the *Revelations*, *chap.* 14. 2. begins with a voice from the waters, the spirits of the people are stirred up to stand up with the Lamb on Mount *Sion*: When there was a raising and stirring in the spirits of many in our dayes, unto the work of Justice and Reformation, how great things were brought forth in that day? But now that pressing and stirring work in the hearts of most, and the good things it tended to is cast off and gone, the lesse thereof is so farre from working any due resentment among us, as that where any remainders of that good old Spirit are yet breathing in any, they are laid aside, and cast into corners, as the fire-brands and troublers of the times, though it is only against the corruptions of the times; that they do appear, and that from their love to Christ and holiness: These are some of the sins of the times, from which we are to come out of and be separate.

FINIS.